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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: social integration

Statement submitted by AARP, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2009/1.

08-61814 (E) 171208

Statement

AARP is honored to be participating in the 47th Session of the United Nations (UN) Commission for Social Development. We are pleased to be joining government delegations and scores of civil society organizations for deliberations on this session's priority theme: social integration.

AARP strongly urges that these deliberations on social integration pay special attention to the rapidly aging population worldwide and carefully consider intergenerational approaches when discussing policies which seek to: increase the participation and integration of social groups; reduce inequalities; and promote access to basic social services, education, and health care for all.

On behalf of the AARP membership, I would like to congratulate the UN for its unstinting commitment to these issues. AARP stands ready to offer our expertise, advice, and experience to these deliberations. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of 40 million members whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for all as we age. AARP has collaborated with the UN for 35 years by participating in major conferences and helping to forge an international constituency on aging.

Since its founding in 1958, AARP has served as a primary source of global information and advocacy on issues affecting aging populations by organizing policy discussions, disseminating research, and strengthening the network of opinion leaders, policymakers, and advocates who believe that everyone should age with dignity and purpose. AARP has held consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council for over 20 years.

Ten years ago, the General Assembly, through Resolution 47/5, decided to observe the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons. This observance was celebrated by all sectors of society, in all corners of the globe. The International Year of Older persons was celebrated in recognition of humanity's demographic coming of age and the promise it held for maturing attitudes and capabilities in social, economic, and cultural contexts, not least for global peace and development in this 21st century.

AARP will, in cooperation with the UN Programme on Ageing, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, host a series of briefings on global aging during the Commission for Social Development. These briefings will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Older Persons, recognize the achievements made in the last ten years, and consider the challenges that lie ahead. The AARP-UN Global Aging Briefing Series will bring together government delegates, NGOs, foundations, and academics to discuss the theme of the Commission for Social Development, "Social Integration," and its relation to older persons.

A framework to promote the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (The Madrid Plan) will also be considered. The Madrid Plan was adopted by over 150 countries six years ago at the Second World Assembly on Ageing "to respond to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in the twenty-first century and to promote the development of a society for all ages." The International Year of Older Persons and the Madrid Plan, represent key milestones on aging policies for the UN.

As the Commission for Social Development deliberates on policies to increase the participation and integration of social groups and seek to reduce inequalities, we take this moment to reiterate the important overarching goal of the Madrid Plan. The Madrid Plan requests that national governments translate the important objectives and recommended actions of the Madrid Plan into national policies and practices that impact positively on the lives of older people.

The UN plan for monitoring the Madrid Plan's implementation is based on a qualitative "bottom-up" approach. Our governments are not being asked to provide a quantitative appraisal of how they have implemented the Madrid Plan but, rather, all stakeholders — including governments, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society — have been encouraged to participate in the review process by providing qualitative data on implementation in their respective communities and countries.

In order to address the information needs of all the stakeholders in the review process, AARP is collaborating with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs to identify significant trends in aging as well as to provide necessary information on the "qualitative techniques" for Madrid Plan implementation. Our annual AARP-UN Briefing Series on Global Aging is integral to this process.

Because the rapidly increasing numbers of older citizens are presenting our nations and our governments with enormous new social and economic challenges, we have been compelled to address difficult questions such as, "What sort of social contract do our governments hold with our citizens?" and "Are our social contracts in need of modification?" We live in an interdependent and interconnected world, and as we continue to face a severe global financial crisis, these challenges and questions will become even more critical. In many countries, the economic crisis already threatens to become a social crisis with great impact particularly on older members of society.

AARP recognizes that each nation clearly has its own unique challenges and will require policies and programs tailored to its own particular needs. But, clearly, the time has come for us to move forward from discussing the challenges to developing and implementing policies to deal with their impact on the future security and dignity of our citizens. At each step along the way, AARP will remain committed to creating a society for all ages.

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Statement submitted by International Movement ATD Fourth World, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

I. Background

In 1995, at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, governments committed themselves to eradicating poverty by focusing on three specific objectives: poverty eradication, full employment and social integration. The Copenhagen Summit established that human social development should be redefined to include social integration through economic, social and cultural participation. These concepts were seen as integral to policy and program development, governmental action, and to the building of inclusive societies. The Copenhagen Summit also emphasized the need to create a society for all – societies that are safe, stable, tolerant, respectful, inclusive, and participatory.

Despite the desire to create an inclusive society, people in persistent poverty are repeatedly denied opportunities to be heard. The International Movement ATD Fourth World supports the idea of a society for all by emphasizing the need to build links between the poorest and most excluded people and people from different backgrounds. A true "Partnership with the Poorest" ensures that the dignity of all individuals is respected. The literature and on-the-ground experience in this area further emphasizes the importance of including the experiences of people living in poverty to "reach, touch, and convince" others to understand poverty more fully and improve poverty eradication initiatives working in partnership.[1] The International Movement ATD Fourth World believes that it is necessary to provide a mechanism for individuals living in poverty to participate actively and collaborate with policy makers. People in poverty and the communities they are part of must become key players in such policy making and initiatives.[2]

II. Social integration defined

The term s*ocial integration* resists definition because of its constantly evolving nature. However, according to the UN Expert Group on Creating an Inclusive Society, it represents "the attempt not to make people adjust to society, but rather to ensure that society is accepting of all people." It involves the embracing of individual differences, while consciously making a concerted and intentional effort to promote diversity by using highly participatory processes that involve – but do not coerce - all stakeholders in the decisions making process. The term s*ocial inclusion* which is frequently used interchangeably – albeit erroneously - with social integration, suggests that one group, for example, people living in poverty, are included or merged into the larger society. There is potential danger in confusing these terms as inclusion – which indicates a power differential between one group and another - is antithetical to the concept of a partnership, where both parties share power. *Social exclusion* describes the process by which oppression, injustice, systemic neglect, and discrimination exist in social structures and in society.[3] Social exclusion can occur on a micro-level (individual), a mezzo-level (organizations, communities), and a macro- level (governmental, structural). Social exclusion is therefore the opposite of social inclusion and social integration.

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[1] *What Works for the Poorest? Knowledge Policies, and Practice;* Chronic Poverty Research Center, May 2007.

[2] *Godinot, Xavier,* The Challenge of Building Knowledge With People Living in Extreme Poverty Not About Them, *2006.*

[3] *Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration.*

III. Wresinski approach

Having grown up himself in poverty, Joseph Wresinski, the late founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, acknowledged that the poorest and most excluded in a community are often denied their human rights and dignity. Wresinski believed that the act of charity, while motivated by good intentions, can undermine the dignity and efforts of people living in poverty. Believing that handouts contribute to feelings of inferiority, dependence and lack of dignity, Wresinski instead supported the idea of meaningful employment and education as a way to create a pathway out of poverty, while allowing individuals to maintain their sense of pride and self worth.

The publication *Redefining Human Rights-Based Development: The Wresinski Approach to Partnership with the Poorest* covers creating partnerships with the poorest as a key strategy in eradicating poverty and achieving social integration.[4] The Wresinski Approach also seeks to redefine work and human activity to enhance social integration by affirming the right of an individual to pursue productive employment and be both creative and useful. These points suggest that true participation requires economic, social and cultural participation. Finally it proposes a number of creative initiatives that promote integration, employment and the eradication of poverty.

IV. Social integration in action: two case studies

This section includes real-world examples of people in poverty who have been active and integral participants in the development of policies and programs.

A. Case Study #1 – The Collective for a Quebec without Poverty is a diverse consortium of nearly 50 national and regional organizations that aim to eliminate poverty. The Collective, with the active participation of ATD Fourth World, successfully advocated for the development and elaboration of a provincial law[5] from 2000-2002 aimed at the elimination of poverty using the collaboration, input and experience of people living in poverty. The Collective used a multi-phase approach to developing the law, by providing people experiencing poverty with opportunities for participation and input at each stage of the process.

1) Consultation – Participants from all over Quebec, including those living in poverty, were surveyed to determine their opinion regarding what the law should include. A proposal was then drafted integrating the thousands of comments and suggestions received from the survey. Proposals included suggestions that poverty eradication must be made a government priority, that the needs of the poorest fifth must be emphasized, and that those in poverty must be integral in the conception, implementation and evaluation of measures designed to tackle poverty.

2) Petition - Using the proposal as an outline, a petition was drafted and signed by over 200,000 people, which included the testimonies of people experiencing poverty themselves.

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[4] ESA/DSPD/BP3, December 1999.

[5] http://www.pauvrete.qc.ca/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=113.

3) Submission - The proposal was then submitted to the National Assembly and was sent to members of Parliament who where asked for an outline of the law based on the proposal.

4) Lobbying – The Collective then presented 167 submissions to the Parliamentary Commission, including several which included the input of people living in poverty.

5) Organization of events – Several events were organized that provided an opportunity for people living in poverty to talk of their experiences. A Citizens Forum and Citizens Agora (Roundtable) focused on facilitating conversation regarding this issue. The Collective organized breakfasts with Members of Parliament, during which participants played Monopoly-style games based on real-life experiences and situations of poverty.

6) Inclusion – Several representatives of people living in poverty were invited to join the Collective Advisory Committee. This ensured that members of the Collective were better able to understand the lives of these individuals, and that those living in poverty had an opportunity to contribute their knowledge and experience.

7) Reference to international instruments – By referencing several international instruments on civil and political rights, the Collective was better able to influence the government.

8) Widespread mobilization - There was widespread support for the development and revision of this law across all regions in Quebec.

Without the work of the Collective, the law would not have been elaborated to include the perspective of individuals living in poverty. Although the process was lengthy, it is successful in demonstrating the need for social integration of the poorest and most excluded.

B. Case Study #2 – BRAC,[6] based in Bangladesh, is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in the world. BRAC has successfully funded several ventures, including an economic development program, a university and other education programs, public healthcare, social development programmes and disaster relief. BRAC approaches poverty using a holistic approach acknowledging that poverty is not just related to a lack of income, but a lack of access to resources that includes education, healthcare, employment, and housing.[7] By emphasizing the importance of empowering citizens and supporting them in their individiual development, instead of utilizing a charity-based perspective, which encourages dependance and disempowerment in the recipient, BRAC tackles poverty using a mulitfaceted appoach. BRAC uses a mixture of practical and creative solutions that put individuals who are living in poverty at the center of their efforts in eradicating poverty. By encouraging participation of those who are the most impoverished and engaging them throughout the process, BRAC is successful in its advocacy, empowerment and developmental efforts.

[6] http://www.brac.net.

[7] Ahmad, Q., Socio-Economic and Indebtedness-related Impact of Micro-credit in Bangladesh, 2007.

One of BRAC's core focus areas is microcredit (first introduced by the Grameen Bank) which is the practice of lending very small amounts of money to individuals who are living in poverty who lack the resources to obtain independent loans. While microcredit has been successful in supporting many individuals worldwide, many of the poorest and most excluded people are not reached. In order to address the issue, BRAC established a program called 'Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction/Targeting the Ultra Poor' which aims to pull the "ultra poor" out of extreme poverty by providing a subsidy along with access to enterprise development training, healthcare, social development and asset transfer.[8] The program thus underscores the importance of offering equitable levels of support and loans to meet the differing needs of individuals within a community. In doing so, BRAC shows that social protection moves beyond the boundaries of simple economic assistance, charity, and poverty alleviation.

V. Social integration toolkit: building partnerships with people in poverty

In order to expand the concept of social integration, ATD Fourth World has developed a toolkit for practice titled, *"Turning Rhetoric into Action: Building effective partnerships to combat extreme poverty and exclusion"*. This report served as a background paper for a roundtable Dialogue on the issue, which was one of the many events commemorating October 17th, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty at the United Nations in New York. The roundtable brought together a diverse group of individuals including people experiencing poverty, UN mission representatives, grass-roots activists, UN specialized agency staff and key players from civil society. The International Movement ATD Fourth World Movement's goal was to use the roundtable as a springboard to further discussion and work in the field.

The participation toolkit defines who 'the poorest' are and describes the key benefits of enabling the long term participation of people living in poverty. A chapter on meaningful participation provides discussion on the shortcomings and quality of current processes, and suggests change in the approach. A chapter on creating conditions for participation includes information on identifying factors that promote or impede success in creating meaningful participation, along with a decision-making flowchart that can be used locally, nationally and internationally. It also offers suggestions for creating meaningful and active participation. The toolkit concludes with a series of case studies from around the world which highlight examples of participation of people living in poverty.

VI. Conclusion

Social integration is not just a concept but also a way of life that allows for the meaningful participation of all members of our society, especially the poorest and most excluded. Joseph Wresinski had a vision that the poorest and most excluded would achieve such participation giving long term support and companionship. If true social integration is to occur, it will require a concerted effort from those who seek to promote the dignity of all people, starting from the experience and lives of those whose human rights and dignity are undermined by extreme poverty.

[8] Barua, P., Sulaiman, M, Targeting the Poorest in Microfinance: Poverty Outreach of BDP Ultra Poor Programme, Working Paper No. 13, 2006.

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Statement submitted by Baha'i International Community, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

Reclaiming freedom of conscience, religion or belief to promote social integration

1. At a time when religious oppression, fanaticism and clashes between differing systems of belief are straining modes of governance, frameworks of development, security, and human rights — we are pleased that the Commission for Social Development has focused on the theme of social integration. This theme, so central to the challenges at every level of society, has been described as the capacity of people to live together with dignity and respect, as well as a process of fostering stable and just societies, in which individuals and communities are free to shape their present and their future. While much attention has been focused on eliminating the socio-economic barriers to social integration, the full achievement of this goal will require countries to also address issues outside of traditional notions of exclusion and disadvantage. To the extent that efforts towards social integration will reflect the diverse voices and aspirations of the world's people, governments will need to tackle one of the most challenging and neglected issues of our time — ensuring every individual's freedom of conscience, religion or belief.

2. The human being is not only an economic and social creature, but also a noble one with a free will and a conscience that makes possible the search for meaning and for truth. Without the freedom to pursue this fundamentally human quest, neither dignity nor justice is possible. The nations of the world have repeatedly committed to upholding an individual's right to freely adopt and change his religion or beliefs, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Yet, approximately half of the world's population still lives under laws, which restrict the right to freely adopt and change one's religion or beliefs.[1] Moreover, restrictions of religious freedom have been linked to diminished well-being in the general population, increased social conflict, poor socio-economic outcomes and political instability.[2]

3. Over the years, the United Nations has increasingly acknowledged the important links between religion, freedom, and human development. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development noted that "societies must respond more effectively to the material and spiritual needs of individuals" and that intolerance and religious hatred pose "severe threats" to human security and well-being.[3] In 2004, the United Nations Human Development Report, for the first time, acknowledged cultural liberty as a vital part of human development and affirmed the "profound importance of religion to people's identities."[4] In an equally significant contribution, the 2004 Arab Human Development Report identified freedom as both the "guarantor and the goal" of human development and

[1] Boyle, K., & Sheen, J. (1997). *Freedom of Religion and Belief: World Report.* London: Routledge.

[2] Marshall, P. A. (Ed.). (2008). *Religious Freedom in the World.* Plymouth, United Kingdom: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

[3] United Nations World Summit for Social Development. (1995). *Report of the World Summit for Social Development.* [URL: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/agreements.html].

[4] UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). (2004). *Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World.* New York: Oxford University Press.

the primary requisite for development in the Arab region.[5] Indeed, there are no grounds for thinking that freedom of conscience, religion or belief is a Western value or concern. Nor should this freedom be seen as a luxury to be pursued only after basic needs for food and shelter have been met. Rather, it is central to efforts to restore human dignity and strengthen community life.

4. A number of developments on the world stage highlight the need for the Commission's attention to this issue. First, a rapidly increasing movement of people and ideas is straining efforts to create peaceful and cohesive communities, particularly in countries that seek to impose homogeneity of practice or belief. Religious oppression continues to undermine social and political stability. Second, in virtually all parts of the world, religion has become a subject of major political and social importance. As compared with legal norms, it is religious and cultural norms that have proven to be the more powerful determinants of attitudes and behaviors — frustrating many governments while bolstering others.

5. Third, the concept of the "defamation of religions," which has distorted the international human rights framework and challenged human rights machinery, has selectively restricted the space for peaceful public exploration and debate of belief-related issues, so desperately needed in diverse and divided communities. Furthermore, the related issue of religious extremism, as a major obstacle to social integration and stability, has yet to be acknowledged by the United Nations. Fourth, the current debate about religion in the public sphere has largely been driven by proponents of extremes — those who impose their religious ideology by force and those who deny any place for expressions of faith or belief in the public sphere. Yet neither extreme represents the views of the majority of humankind.

6. The freedom of conscience, religion or belief may well be the next frontier in the march towards social integration. With every successive moral battle — whether focused on slavery, apartheid, racism, discrimination against women, or nationalism — humanity has broken down barriers to social integration and raised yet another pillar of a more just global community. The Bahá'í International Community would like to take this opportunity to highlight possible lines of action that could be pursued by the Commission, by governments, and by civil society to further the protection of the freedom of conscience, religion or belief to promote social integration.

7. Any long-term strategy to foster an understanding of this freedom must be rooted in efforts to promote literacy and education: women, men and children who can read their own scriptures and those of other religions or beliefs, who are free to question and discuss, and who are able to participate in the generation and application of knowledge will be better prepared to counter the forces of ignorance and fanaticism. The Toledo Guiding Principles

[5] UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, & Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations. (2005). *Arab Human Development Report 2004: Towards Freedom in the Arab World.* New York: United Nations Publications.

on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools,[6] an initiative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, provides a recent example of an effort to promote a better understanding of the role that religions play in today's pluralistic world. While such an understanding alone will not lead to greater respect, no doubt an absence of such understanding underpins much conflict and stereotyping. The Guiding Principles do not advocate any one curriculum but, rather, offer guidance on designing and implementing curricula which are fair and balanced in their treatment of religions and beliefs.

8. Another concrete effort comes from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, where the government, in response to a recent report from its Commission on Integration and Cohesion, has launched a plan to tackle community tensions. It includes a consultative process to develop a strategy for fostering meaningful interactions between people from different faith communities, and between faith communities and wider civil society.[7] These are but two examples among a growing body of initiatives springing up in communities and nations around the world. A spirit of experimentation can be discerned as communities and institutions engage in bridge-building initiatives, driven by a desire to know, to understand, and to connect. As such efforts gain in capacity, impact and prominence, they will contribute to the dynamic learning process that drives efforts towards social integration.

9. We offer the following recommendations as possible next steps for advancing the freedom of conscience, religion or belief to promote social integration:

    - The Commission for Social Development should acknowledge the role of freedom of conscience, religion or belief in social development and in the establishment of cohesive and just societies.
    - The United Nations and relevant stakeholders should initiate research into the connection between freedom of conscience, religion or belief and various dimensions of social development including, but not limited to: gender equality, poverty, education, knowledge production and socio-economic structures.
    - Governments could call for a Secretary-General's report on the aforementioned issue. Among other things, the report could examine the impact of limitations of this freedom on particularly vulnerable groups (e.g. women, children, refugees, minorities and migrant workers) to better understand how this creates further barriers to their social integration.

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[6] The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODHIR). (2007). *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religion and Beliefs in Public Schools.* Warsaw, Poland: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

[7] Department for Communities and Local Government. (2008). *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in our Multi Faith Society.* London, United Kingdom.

- In collaboration with civil society, governments should develop a strategy to facilitate local and/or regional consultations on this theme so as to raise consciousness about this freedom and to inform government policy.
- Government should develop guidelines for teaching about religions and beliefs in public schools.
- The Commission could request that the Human Rights Committee issue a new comment related to the freedom of conscience, religion or belief (as provided for in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Given the many questions related to this freedom that have arisen since the Committee's first comment on this right in 1993[8] (e.g. the defamation of religions, minority rights), it would be helpful to have further legal clarity on this right.

10. The individual's freedom of conscience, religion and belief is at the core of human development and efforts to create a just and harmonious society. The collective task of moving towards increasing levels of integration and cohesion is unthinkable if a significant portion of the world's population is not free to partake in the exploration and debate at the promptings of their intellect and conscience.

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[8] *Human Rights Committee, General Comment 22.* Article 18. (1994). U.N. Doc. HRIGEN1Rev.1 at 35.

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Statement submitted by Global Youth Action Network, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

Introduction

1. The following is a statement by the Global Youth Action Network to the 47th session of the Commission for Social Development on the theme of social inclusion. Youth comprise approximately 18% of the world's population, and 85% of youth live in developing countries.[1] With youth comprising such a percentage of the population, they should and must be consulted on issues that affect their lives. Youth have valuable input and experiences to provide, and efforts to increase social integration among young people will not be effective unless young people feel ownership of the process.

2. Global Youth Action Network conducted an electronic consultation with over one hundred forty of its member organizations in forty-two countries and in three different languages to discuss the idea and principals of social integration.[2] Members discussed the building blocks of social integration — inclusion, participation, and justice. Their summarized experiences and opinions about these key principals of social integration follow, and we urge all Governments to listen to their views and recommendations when creating and implementing policies to further develop "societies for all".

Inclusion

3. Participants define inclusion as allowing all people without discrimination to be recognized, encompassed and protected by policies governments make. But, participants see the promotion of inclusion not only in the roles of policymakers but also individuals. One participant from Bangladesh defines inclusion as *"The diverse participation of individuals, who though separate in terms of race and religion, can meet on common humanitarian [ground] for the establishment of a culturally diversified, harmonious, and peaceful nation."* Youth participants ask to be respected and considered because of their diverse perspectives.

4. While participants believe inclusion is necessary to build "societies for all", they still see much exclusion in their countries. Decent education still remains a privilege of the rich, not a right for everyone. A participant from Ghana asks *"How fair of a society do we make when intelligent and capable people are left unrecognized [and] limited in their choices because they have no university degrees, and so they become marginalized, discriminated against, unemployed, poor and hungry?"*

5. Policymakers need to work with the people that are most affected by exclusion to bring them into society. One participant from Kenya suggests *"Policymakers be trained outside the formal education to understand the importance of inclusion in any process affecting the country, a society, or a group of people."*

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[1] Youth and the United Nations, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm.

[2] For a full archive of messages and a list of participants, please visit: http://groups.takingitglobal.org/gyan_csocd09.

Participation

6. The responsibility to ensure participation does not lie entirely with governments. Yet, governments should educate individuals on their rights and duties as members of a society, and also encourage their policymakers to open new avenues for dialogue and seek out the experiences of those marginalized . A participant from Indonesia believes *participation happens when policymakers consult citizens, ask the people to discuss, and make a solution together*.

7. Being contributors to development is also very important to young people. A participant in Sierra Leone says *"Policymakers still regard youth as problems instead of a solution."* Consultation participants are all involved in organizations striving to actively participate in their communities, and they prove that they can be part of the solution. Participants also suggest national service, open forums, and wider use of technology as ways of becoming engaged.

Justice

8. Many participants feel that justice is "creating a sense of fairness on the state level." To an Eritrean participant, this fairness translates as *"The people's right to education, health, etc. is what should be achieved."* Other participants also agree that education and healthcare should be a right for all, but few participants actually see this sense of fairness being carried out. A participant in the Democratic Republic of the Congo *does not rely on the government to make changes, but rather, depends on the Congolese people*.

9. Low confidence in government and institutions does not promote social inclusion. Members of society who feel apathetic or left behind by policies will not want to participate in their governments. A participant in Mexico *does not see much justice in his society, but believes to combat corruption by actively engaging in society can lead to justice*.

10. High levels of corruption all over the world continue to undermine the work towards social inclusion and leave people with little hope in their countries. These attitudes should not be acceptable. One participant from Uganda describes *the biggest problem as implementing the policies already in place*. Policies without action have no meaning. Member countries must become serious about addressing the fundamental building blocks—inclusion, participation, and justice—of social integration. Without addressing all three of these issues, the vision of creating "societies for all" can not be realized.

11. Recommendations

Considering the consultation with our youth participations, we recommend:

1. **Governments encourage projects that raise community awareness about social integration - Education in all sectors (formal, informal, and non-formal) must be used to promote understanding within the community, knowledge of their rights, and to ensure all people have opportunities for social mobility.**

2. **Governments should encourage participatory dialogue- Policymakers should become more accessible to communities by means of open forums to discuss issues before creating policies.**

3. **Governments must be accountable to all members of society. Accountability should be achieved through transparency in the recruitment and decision making process in public policy offices. Governments should provide accessible information about public services, rights, and opportunities for all people.**

4. **Governments should provide accessible healthcare and education to all people. Education and healthcare should be considered a basic right for all groups in society. Governments should insure equal opportunity for employment, public office, and civil service.**